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Viewing cable 08MEXICO714, SECRETARY CHERTOFF AND MINISTER MOURINO DISCUSS

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| Reference ID | Created | Released | Classification | Origin |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 08MEXICO714 | 2008-03-11 19:40 | 2011-08-30 01:44 | CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN | Embassy Mexico |

Appears in these articles:

<http://wikileaks.jornada.com.mx/notas/bajo-la-mesa-washington-culpa-a-mexico-del-trafico-de-armas>

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RR RUEHCD RUEHGD RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHNG RUEHNL RUEHRD RUEHRS RUEHTM
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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0855
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Embassy Mexico
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 000714

SIPDIS

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PASS TO DHS ADAM ISLES

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/08/2027
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KCRM](#) [SNAR](#) [KHLS](#) [MX](#)
SUBJECT: SECRETARY CHERTOFF AND MINISTER MOURINO DISCUSS
COOPERATION IN MEETING SHARED CHALLENGES

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Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Charles V. Barclay. Reason
: 1.4 (b),(d).

¶1. C) Summary DHS Secretary Chertoff stressed with Mexico's Minister of Government Mourino the importance the U.S. attached to greater access to Special Interest Aliens (SIAs) illegally in Mexico. He requested Mexico consider requiring passenger manifest information on a mandatory basis. Mourino conveyed concern about violence on the border and urged the U.S. to do more to combat arms trafficking. Both sides agreed to work to exchange more intelligence and deepen cooperation as part of a concerted effort to disrupt smuggling and trafficking organizations along the border. End Summary.

Merida Initiative Sends Important Message to Traffickers

¶2. (U) In a 2/28 meeting with Mexico's Minister of Government Juan Camilo Mourino on the margins of the SPP meeting in los Cabos, Mexico, DHS Secretary Chertoff praised the Calderon administration's efforts to combat organized crime and the coordination between the U.S. and Mexico that has proven so crucial to this campaign. He assured Mourino that winning passage of the Merida Initiative remains a priority. Mourino acknowledged that Mexico needs the assistance the Merida Initiative promises but insisted Mexico considers the initiative as valuable for the message it sends to traffickers that the U.S. and Mexican governments are working together in their fight.

Dealing with SIAs

¶3. (C) Secretary Chertoff recounted how in the past Mexico had held Special Interest Aliens (SIAs) illegally in Mexico upwards of 30 days allowing U.S. law enforcement authorities access to them before their release. He lamented an apparent change in policy that facilitates their rapid release) sometimes in as few as five days -- often effectively denying U.S. officials access to these individuals, including the ability to obtain their fingerprints. Separately, the U.S. was concerned simple release of SIAs allowed for them to resume their trip north. Chertoff informed Mourino that the U.S. was prepared to assist in flying SIAs back to their country of origin, confident this measure reduced their prospects of making it into the U.S.

¶4. (C) According to Mourino and GOM CISEN officials, complaints by NGOs about allowing foreign officials access to third country nationals had prompted Mexico to change its policy with regard to allowing USG officials access to SIAs. Mexico was prepared to share information it acquired from its own interviews with SIAs. Mourino hoped adoption of a new

policy in short order would require aliens to return the same way they had arrived within three days of release.

Providing Manifest Information on a Mandatory Basis

15. (C) Airlines flying to Mexico provide advanced passenger information (API) on a voluntary basis, which is then forwarded to DHS for analysis against lookout date. CARICOM has agreed to the same but on a mandatory basis. Chertoff told Mourino the U.S. was prepared to work to continue funding GOM cooperation on this issue but requested Mexico make this transmittal of API mandatory as was the case with many countries around the world. Mourino said that he would have to look into this issue.

Joining Efforts to Reduce Border Violence, Target Organized Crime

16. (C) Chertoff Indicated that closer coordination in targeting particular organizations could strengthen efforts to reduce violence along the border. Mourino agreed but conveyed concern about CBP's use of tear gas and the attention this was drawing in the Mexican press. Chertoff said the U.S. would look into adopting the use of interoperable radios at the command level as a way of improving coordination and consequently reducing violence on the border. He suggested law enforcement authorities from both sides should strengthen joint targeting of high priority smuggling and trafficking organizations. At

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Mourino's suggestion, they agreed to consider the Tijuana area of operation and to follow-up again in the near future to discuss how to advance this approach.

Stepping Up Cooperation on Combating Arms Trafficking

17. (C) Mourino stressed Mexico's concern about the trafficking of arms across the U.S. border both in small and large shipments via purchases made at gun shows as well as transshipments merely moving through the U.S. from third countries. Mexico appreciated the USG's e-trace program but maintained it did not apply to large weapons and did not represent a solution to the problem in and of itself. Mourino was pleased to learn of "Armas Cruzadas," an initiative that would improve coordination among ICE, ATF, CBP, and other agencies as part of efforts to tackle more effectively arms trafficking but requested the U.S. do more to publicize this initiative. Chertoff stressed the need for better intelligence on arms trafficking. He conveyed a desire to revisit this issue in the officials' upcoming visit on the border.

18. (U) Secretary Chertoff's delegation cleared this message.

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